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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT

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ISSUE LABOR CODE IN HUNGARY

The Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic has issued a decree entitled "Labor Code." The decree, which applies to all employers and employees, codifies the basic changes in labor relations which have taken place in Hungary as a result of the political and economic transformation of the country.

One of the most important provisions of the code regulates the system of collective agreements in individual plants. This provision supersedes the system of collective agreements by trades.

Under the new system, the workers, together with the director of the enterprise, insure work discipline, the extension of work contests and of the Stakhanovite movement, and the improvement in working conditions.

The code limits the workday to 8 hours, and states that under unhealthy working conditions the workday may be shorter. It also states the conditions under which employment may be terminated.

To strengthen work discipline and to reduce labor turnover, the code states the conditions under which an employee may give notice. In these cases the worker is not subject to the penalties attendant upon arbitrary termination of employment.

The code also regulates the question of paid vacations. Up to now, the length of paid vacations has been uniform, whether the worker was engaged in heavy or light work. It assures 12 days of paid vacation for all workers. Miners, metallurgical workers, teachers, executives, etc., are entitled to longer vacations.

All enterprises are required to contribute to the establishment and upkeep of workers' cultural, sport, health, and welfare institutions.

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The code contains detailed regulations concerning industrial safety, job security, and medical care, and provides periodic physical examinations for persons who work under unfavorable conditions. It assures the workers direct participation in the organization and supervision of institutions designed to protect worker interests. The Minister of Health and the Council of National Labor Unions are entrusted with the supervision of the industrial health program.

The code contains far-reaching regulations which enable women to participate in productive labor to an increasing degree. It prescribes equal pay rates for men and women and decrees that women may not be employed for work which would be physically injurious to them. Pregnant women and mothers are protected. Their employment for heavy physical work, night work, and overtime work is limited.

The code devotes a special chapter to the protection of minors. Children under 14 years of age may not be employed, except for light work during school vacations. Youths under the age of 16 may be employed only for work which, according to medical opinion, will not interfere with their physical and mental development. The code also provides preferential vacations for minors.

The code contains far-reaching measures to encourage the further education of workers. In the interests of further education, the code prescribes leaves of absence and preferential working hours.

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